



South Asia Women's Entrepreneurship Symposium (SAWES) Small Grants Competition

Guidelines for SAWES Small Grants Competition

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Asia Foundation and the U.S. Department of State are pleased to announce a competition for small grants to support priority areas identified during the South Asia Women's Entrepreneurship Symposium (SAWES). The Symposium, hosted by the U.S. Department of State in December 2012, aimed to support the New Silk Road vision of enhancing regional economic integration and advancing economic growth, peace, and stability.

The Asia Foundation with support from the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs is implementing follow-on activities and strategies which address four key priority areas developed during the Symposium. These include:

- Support market access and trade for women entrepreneurs
- Promote a policy and regulatory environment which supports women's entrepreneurship
- Information sharing and networking to promote business linkages and trade
- Capacity building and business skills development

SAWES has put in place a steering committee with representation of women from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Along with the steering committee, SAWES working groups in each country implement action points from the Symposium to support regional collaboration and networking among women entrepreneurs. Activities implemented to date include two exposure visits for women entrepreneurs to Sri Lanka and India, development of a SAWES Facebook page with over 31,000 members, and informal assessments of existing business associations and federations for women entrepreneurs.

1.2 Small Grants Objectives and Approach

To further address priority areas identified at the Symposium, The Asia Foundation is soliciting proposals from business associations, organizations working on advancing women's entrepreneurship, women's chambers of commerce, and other eligible organizations. The objective of the grants is to advance regional cooperation between women entrepreneurs in the South and Central Asian regions.

Possible areas of focus:

- Access to cross border markets
- Information sharing on policy and regulatory environments relevant to conducting business across South Asia
- Cross-border networking among business associations on marketing opportunities, product information, etc.
- Use of technology as a tool to promote business linkages and trade
- Finance and administrative support for women entrepreneurs to expand their business into regional markets
- Capacity-building opportunities related to business skills, access to finance, or business promotion

Proposals should develop innovative approaches in support of priority areas that can be implemented in a 12-month timeframe.

2. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

2.1 Eligibility Requirements for Applicants

Organizations that meet the following criteria will be eligible to apply for the small grants:

- Eligible countries include: Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Cross border project proposals with Afghanistan or Pakistan will be accepted, but the primary recipient must be from one of the eligible countries. We strongly encourage applicants from Pakistan to apply under U.S. Embassy Islamabad's Women's Empowerment Programs funding opportunity which can be accessed [here](#) and Entrepreneurship Programs funding opportunity available [here](#).
- Must have legal registration that allows the partner to receive foreign funds in the country where it is based.
- Non-profit organization (NGO, chamber of commerce, trade association, etc.)
- Non-partisan
- Must be able to demonstrate a strong programmatic knowledge and ability to implement activities in its proposed area of focus

2.2 Application Process

Proposals from eligible partners should be short, concise and include the following sections, not exceeding 5 pages.

a. Project Summary

Provide a brief overview of project approach and activities including a statement on project goals and objectives. The goals and objectives should directly address the objective of this grant: to advance regional cooperation between women entrepreneurs in the South and Central Asian regions.

b. Background and Context

Describe what regional trade issue affecting women entrepreneurs will be addressed in proposed activities. This discussion should be framed in terms of a broader overview of barriers to cross-border trade that effect women entrepreneurs.

c. Activities and Timeline

Provide an overview of the activities to be conducted. Activities should be directly in line with the proposed goals and objectives. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the activities planned will advance one or more of the priority areas identified in section 1.2. A timeline of activities should also be provided. **All activities should be completed within a project period of 12 months.**

d. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The recipient will be responsible for monitoring all program activities to track progress and results against proposed objectives. The proposal should include a draft monitoring and evaluation plan which includes proposed indicators and a description of each indicator. The proposal should describe how data will be collected, analyzed and used. Monitoring methods must include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data.

e. Estimated budget

The proposal must include a section on the estimated costs for the project which should be between \$10,000-\$40,000 for proposals from Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. For proposals from India, the budget should be between \$10,000 - \$55,000. If the proposal is selected for support, a detailed budget will be requested. Cost sharing is encouraged.

f. Annex

Please submit an organizational profile which highlights organizational commitment and experience relevant to the proposed program. Please include CV's of all staff responsible for the implementation of the project. If the project will be implemented in partnership with other organization or entity please include organizational profile and CV's of relevant staff of this organization or entity.

Proposals should be submitted electronically to the following contact in your country:

Bangladesh: Rozana Majumdar: Rozana.Majumdar@asiafoundation.org

India: Reecha Upadhyay: Reecha.Upadhyay@asiafoundation.org

Maldives and Sri Lanka: Chullante Jayasuriya: Chullante.Jayasuriya@asiafoundation.org

Nepal: Srijana Chettri: Srijana.Chettri@asiafoundation.org

The deadline for the submission of proposals is 5:00 p.m. on 14 April 2014.

2.3 Application Review

The project proposals will be assessed by a review committee consisting of The Asia Foundation (TAF) in India in cooperation with the US State Department and TAF South Asia field offices.

Criteria to be considered include:

- Effectiveness of the proposed program towards reaching the grant's stated objective.
- The plausibility of achieving the identified result within the allotted timeframe of up to 12 months or sooner.
- Cost effectiveness of proposed activities.
- Extent of partner's experience and programmatic knowledge related to proposed activities.
- The partner's ability to implement, monitor, and evaluate the proposed activities.
- Proposals must be in the format specified in Section 2.2 and will be evaluated based on the requirements of each section.

All project proposals will be reviewed after the date of deadline (14 April 2014). This is a competitive fund and it is unlikely all applications will be approved. The Asia Foundation aims to make the first grants to organizations selected under this small grants competition by 30 April, 2014.

Once grants are made, TAF will be in regular communication with the grantees to track activity progress in light of the agreed-upon timeline and objectives. TAF will rely on grantee reporting as well as staff oversight to monitor progress against agreed indicators.